

Bashor Team Athletics

Environmental Protection Agency
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OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

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EPA-REGION 10

Businesses in Portland rely on the waterways, whether it is the commercial fishermen, the guides, or the tour boats like the Portland Spirit. Any long-term, large-scale project to decontaminate the river, such as the one that the EPA is proposing, will have an immediate and direct financial impact. The restaurants that are located on the waterfront, as well as the people who recreate or live on the waterfront will be impacted also. The waterfront is where people gather in Portland, so just from a business standpoint, the EPA's plan to dredge the Willamette River is going to do some obvious damage.

I don't believe that polluting the air with excavation equipment in order to clear the polluted sediment underwater is such a great plan anyway. Especially when one considers that the EPA's plan will create an eyesore in Portland for decades. Running diesel engines all day and polluting the air to clean up the dirt underwater doesn't really make much sense.

The project will be funded through higher taxes. Higher taxes would cause businesses, like mine, to pass the cost on to our customers in the form of higher prices. I own a sporting good business that has been in operation since 1944. Businesses like mine operate in a very competitive market because most people shop online now. Therefore, we need to keep prices as low as possible. If our taxes rise to pay for the EPA project, it will be difficult to remain competitive.

Although we hope that an agency whose sole purpose is protecting the environment is doing just that, it is hard to believe that the EPA has the best interests of Portland's business community at heart. However, it would be nice to know that they, at least, have the best interests of the environment at heart.

From a human standpoint, we want the Willamette to be a healthy river. I personally recreate frequently on the river; I kayak, fish, and raft. The Army Corps of Engineers suggests monitoring the contaminated areas of the river for the natural rehabilitation that occurs over time. They also see dredging as being a last resort rather than a first. This seems like a much more reasonable approach than what the EPA is proposing.

Sincerely

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Owner

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